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THE
VIRGINIA MAGAZINE
OF
HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

VOL. IX.

APRIL, 1902.

No. 4.

THE GERMANS OF THE VALLEY.

By JOHN WALTER WAYLAND.

PREFATORY NOTE.

During the session of 1900-1901 of the University of Virginia, the Colonial Dames of America, in the State of Virginia, gave further evidence of their own intelligent and enthusiastic interest in Virginia Colonial History by endeavoring to arouse our Virginia youth to a zealous study of the early history of the Old Dominion. The form this effort took is apparent from the following resolutions adopted by the Faculty of the University of Virginia:

WHEREAS, The Colonial Dames of America, in the State of Virginia, have offered to the students of the University of Virginia a gold medal of the value of forty dollars, or the equivalent thereof in money, for the best essay on any subject bearing upon Colonial Virginia History, and

WHEREAS, The Faculty of the University gratefully recognizes the generosity of this offer and highly commends its wisdom; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the faculty of the University of Virginia in accepting this offer, begs to express to the Colonial Dames its sincerest appreciation of their kindness, and pledges its hearty co-operation in this laudable effort to interest our young men in the early history of the Mother State, and

Resolved, further, that these resolutions be forwarded to the President of the Colonial Dames of America, in the State of Virginia.

As all the conditions of this award were wisely left entirely to the Faculty, the following resolution was also passed:

Resolved, That the Professor of History and two other members of the Faculty selected by him shall constitute the committee having charge of this award.

Committee: Professors Dabney, Kent and Harrison.

This committee formulated certain simple regulations governing the kind of essays admitted to this competition, time of closing contest, etc., and gave due notice of this valuable prize.

In due time five essays were submitted: two on the romantically fascinating theme, Bacon's Rebellion; a third on A Virginia Parish, by John Hampden Chamberlayne, Jr.; another on Virginia County Names, by Charles M. Long, and a fifth on the Germans of the Valley, by John Walter Wayland. These three were considered of so much merit that they were passed to a special committee composed of C. D. Fishburne, R. T. W. Duke, Jr., and John Thompson Brown, Jr., who gave to them the most careful and painstaking consideration. Their task was by no means easy for they were impressed with the literary quality of A Virginia Parish and the thoughtful historical investigation of the origin of Virginia County Names. But weighing all consideration of importance of theme, accuracy of work, and literary finish, they finally reached the conclusion that Mr. Wayland's paper deserved the first place.

This flattering award was the final triumph of Mr. Wayland's unusual career last session, during which, in addition to graduating on three courses, he won the English Literature prize for the best Short Story, the Magazine prize for the best Essay, and the Bryan prize for the best paper on the Theory of Government.

The ladies who originated this excellent method of enlisting the direct interest of young men in this admirable work certainly deserve hearty congratulations upon the complete success of the plan, and the University of Virginia is deeply appreciative of their decision to renew their offer. Already there is much interest in the competition, and it is highly probable that ten or fifteen essays may be submitted this session. No disappointment,

however, should be felt either here or by the Colonial Dames, if none of these papers attain the high excellence reached last session, for Mr. Wayland and his worthy rivals have set high the standard for collegiate essays.

CHARLES W. KENT.

The Germans of the Valley.*

A SKETCH OF THE GERMAN ELEMENT IN THE VALLEY OF VIRGINIA FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF THE COUNTRY UNTIL THE APPROXIMATE CLOSE OF THE COLONIAL PERIOD AT THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, A. D.

BY HANS JUNG.

In the preparation of this essay the writer has had access to the following published works.

1. A History of the Valley of Virginia—Kerchaval—1850.
2. History of Augusta County, Virginia—Peyton—1882.
3. Annals of Augusta County, Virginia—Waddell—1888.
4. Scotch-Irish of the Valley of Virginia—Waddell—1895.
5. History of the Lower Shenandoah Valley—Norris—1890.
6. Virginia and Virginians—Brock—1888.
7. History of the German Element in Virginia—Schuricht—1897-1898.
8. A History of the German Baptist Brethren—Brumbaugh—1899.
9. A History of the Kägy Relationship—Keagy—1899.
10. History of Virginia—Charles Campbell—1847.
11. History of the Colony and Ancient Dominion of Virginia—Charles Campbell—1860.
12. Old Virginia and Her Neighbors—Fiske—1900.

I have also to acknowledge my willing indebtedness to the following individuals:

1. Mr. Elon O. Henkel, New Market, Va.
2. Judge W. B. Simmons, Fincastle, Va.
3. Elder A. J. Kagey, Mt. Jackson, Va.
4. Mr. W. C. Moomaw, Cloverdale, Va.
5. Mr. W. G. Nininger, Daleville, Va.

* See "Notes and Queries," this number of the Magazine.—ED.

6. Elder J. M. Kagey, Dayton, Va.
7. Mr. A. H. Snyder, Editor *Rockingham Register*, Harrisonburg, Va.

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- I. Introductory Remarks.
- II. A Pen Sketch of the Valley.
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- VI. The Germans of the Valley as Pioneers.
- VII. Home Life of the Germans.
- VIII. Religious Life of the Valley Germans.
- IX. Two Representative Men.

I. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

Virginia from the beginning has been essentially a commonwealth of Englishmen; and because of this fact we often fail to emphasize sufficiently the elements in her population that are not English. After the English, perhaps the next place on the scroll of Virginia's glory can be claimed by the Scotch-Irish. To this hardy stock no one will deny its full meed of honor. Its place in the history of the State and Nation is conspicuous and secure. On the other hand, it may be that the German element in our State life is frequently not accorded its due share of recognition. Persons who have not given special attention to the service rendered by the Germans in the building of our civil structure, would be surprised to know how important that service has been. It is not the purpose of this article to attempt the setting forth of the part performed by the Germans in the State as a whole; but a few facts out of the province chosen may be mentioned here in passing. There were several German artisans in the Jamestown colony from its beginning; later on, German settlements were established in various parts of the country, notably, in what are now Spotsylvania and Madison counties. As early as 1635 the following German names, with others, appear on the Virginia Land Patents Registers: Johann Busch, Thomas Spielmann, John Schumann, Ph. Clauss, Henry Kohlman, John Laube. The oldest volume of county records, kept at Henrico

Courthouse in Richmond, mentions as prosecutors, defendants, and witnesses many persons that were evidently Germans : John Bauman, Georg Krontz, Will. Blackman, and others. It is probable that Colonel William Byrd, when he founded the city of Richmond in 1733, sold the first lot of land to a German, and that the oldest building in the city—"the old stone house on Main street," still standing—was built by a German. The following interesting item appeared in the *Richmond Dispatch* of January 12, 1896 :

"In 1737 the half-acre lot No. 32, fronting on Main between what are now Nineteenth and Twentieth streets, was conveyed by deed from William Byrd and wife to Samuel Ege, and from the amount of the consideration mentioned in the deed, it is presumed there were improvements then on the lot. It is very probable that the stone house had been standing on this lot long before the date of this deed. It is reasonable to conjecture that Fort Charles was located on the present site of the old stone house, and that the stones of the fort were used by Colonel Byrd in the construction of the house used as his quarters. If this be so, the old stone house may be said to have existed in some shape for about 250 years."

Whether the old stone house in question was built by Colonel Byrd or another, seems to be a matter of dispute ; but the several statements agree that the lot No. 32 came into the possession of the German family, Ege, soon after the founding of Richmond.

Several reasons may be mentioned why the German element among us has not been accorded more prominence. In the first place, only a few of Virginia historians have been Germans, or persons acquainted well with them. Then, too, in the early days of the colony there was a prevalent disposition to regard the Germans (or "Dutch," as they were generally called) with a sort of contempt. This moderate aversion was heightened somewhat during the War of Independence, owing to the fact that many German mercenary troops (Hessians and others) fought in the British service. The writer has known personally several worthy German citizens, who, no longer than a few decades ago, had scarcely overcome the prejudice of certain classes, a prejudice not engendered because these particular

Germans were descendants of the hirelings of the British, but simply because they themselves had come to America from Hesse Cassel. This prevalent contempt, however ill-founded and frivolous it may have been, had the effect, nevertheless, to produce in many of the Germans the ill-advised disposition—patriotic, it may be, from the American standpoint—to get rid as soon as possible of their original speech and nationality. Such a transformation as this was not, as may readily be perceived, easily or quickly accomplished; and many ludicrous blunders accompanied the effort to become English too quickly. For instance, when an honest “Dutchman,” who was not ashamed of his “Vaterland,” would chance to meet a neighbor, less tenacious of his mother tongue, the latter might respond, to a remark addressed to him in German: “O, gay vay mit your Deutsch; you know I besser English.” Such incidents actually occurred within the knowledge of the writer’s mother. It is still the custom, among the more intelligent Germans in some localities, to employ the German language in speaking to the children, in order that the two languages, German and English, may be cultivated together; but the preference given by the young members of the family to the English tongue is very apparent; the conversation on their part is generally carried on in English, though the parents address them in German.

So the Germans themselves are in great measure responsible for the fact that they are not duly accredited with their part in the development of the Virginia colony. Many foolishly disavowed their German nationality and claimed English, French, or Scotch descent, thinking thereby to elevate their social station. In nothing is this tendency, or disposition, to obscure nationality more apparent than in the present spelling of many German names. It is not to be supposed that all German families, especially in the Valley of Virginia, have intentionally, or otherwise, obscured their lineage in the spelling of their names; but the Anglicized forms are often necessarily somewhat misleading. For example, metamorphoses like the following are occasionally found: Schaefer, Shepherd, Shafer, Shaver; Kloess, Kloss, Gloss, Glaize; Keinadt, Knunath, Koiner, Koyner, Coyner, Coiner, Kiner, Cuyner, Cyner.

But in spite of all the forces that have combined to transform

the Germans of the Valley, they still exist as real personages. Their language, it is true, has fallen generally into disuse, and the habits of life that would attract the stranger's notice, because of their peculiarly German marks, have disappeared; nevertheless, the inherent and essential characteristics of the race are still maintained; and even in the names of the Valley places and people, despite the Anglicizing tendencies, there is noticeable a remarkable contrast with the names on the opposite side of the Blue Ridge, Frederick county, and numerous towns and villages in the Valley, as Strasburg, Zapp, Hinckle, Chrisman, Hamburg, and Amsterdam have names unmistakably German; and numberless families, as, for example, the Smuckers, Lautzes, Koontzs, Lutzs, Dinglelines, Zirkles, Rosenbergers, Kochenours, Garbers, Huffmans, and Hildebrands could at once, from their autographs, be identified with that sturdy and painstaking race that has helped to make the Valley of Virginia the most prosperous section of the Old Dominion.

II. A PEN SKETCH OF THE VALLEY.

Let us now get a bird's-eye view of the Valley of Virginia—the home of the people we are studying.

Along the northwest border of Virginia run the southeast ranges of the Alleghany Mountains, with numerous outlying spurs. Thirty miles within the State border, parallel in general with the Alleghany ranges, runs the single range of the Blue Ridge. The long, narrow belt of country—thirty miles wide and ten times as long—between the Blue Ridge and the Alleghanies, is the Valley of Virginia. The northeast half of it, from Staunton to Harper's Ferry, is the Shenandoah Valley, and contains the counties of Augusta, Rockingham, Page, Shenandoah, Warren, Frederick, Clarke, Berkeley, and Jefferson (these two counties are now within the border of West Virginia); the southwest half, from Staunton to the border of North Carolina and Tennessee, is drained by the head-waters of four great rivers, the James, the Roanoke, the Great Kanawha, and the Tennessee, and contains the counties of Rockbridge, Botetourt, Roanoke, Craig, Montgomery, Floyd, Pulaski, Carroll, Wythe, Grayson, Smyth, and Washington. Thus we find Washington county at one end of the Valley, Jefferson county

at the other end, and Augusta and Rockbridge joining in the middle. It is worth while to notice, also, that the dividing line between Augusta and Rockbridge, running at right angles across the Valley, is practically on the height of land that divides the head-waters of the Shenandoah from the head-waters of the James.*

The whole Valley of Virginia was a part of Orange county until the year 1738. In that year the country west of the Blue Ridge was erected into the two counties of Frederick and Augusta. In the year 1769, Botetourt county was taken from Augusta; in 1772, Berkeley and Dunmore (Shenandoah) were taken from Frederick, and Fincastle was formed from a part of Botetourt. In 1776, Fincastle was divided into the three counties of Kentucky, Washington, and Montgomery, and the name of Fincastle, as a county name, became extinct;† in 1777, Rockbridge county was taken from Augusta and Botetourt; Rockingham was formed from a part of Augusta in about the same year; in 1789, Wythe county was taken from Montgomery, and a part of Botetourt was added to Montgomery; and in 1792, Grayson county was formed from a part of Wythe.

The southwest half of the Valley was settled by people of various nationalities, Germans, French Huguenots, etc., but chiefly by Scotch-Irish; the northwest half—the Shenandoah Valley—also numbered Scotch-Irish and Huguenots among its pioneers, but it was settled chiefly by Germans;‡ so it is with the Shenandoah Valley that we shall become most familiar in this study.

* Let it be understood that only some of the tributaries of the James rise in the Valley; the chief tributaries in this region have their head-fountains beyond the first Alleghany ranges, in Alleghany, Bath, and Highland counties—these three counties of Virginia forming an offset at this point beyond the Valley into West Virginia.

† The county-seat of Botetourt is the town of Fincastle.

‡ This statement is true only in a general sense, since there are particular sections of the whole district that were originally settled mainly by people not Germans. For example, most of the first settlers in Augusta county (as bounded now) were Scotch-Irish, and probably most of the original settlers in what is now Clarke county were English, from Eastern Virginia.

About one-third of the Shenandoah Valley is included within the limits of Augusta and Rockingham counties. These are the largest two counties in the State, and each extends entirely across the Valley. From the northeast border of Rockingham the rest of the counties composing the Shenandoah Valley extend in two parallel rows or belts, to the Potomac river. The dividing line between these two rows of counties is composed of the Massanutten Mountain and the Opequon river. Near Keezletown, in Rockingham county, the Massanutten range begins and runs northeast for a distance of fifty miles, dividing the Valley, not equally but leaving two-thirds on the side towards the Alleghanies. A short distance below Strasburg where the Massanutten Mountain ends begins the Opequon River and flows on another fifty miles into the Potomac River, the Opequon's general course being on a line with the Massanutten range. Beginning again at the northeast border of Rockingham and going toward the Potomac, we find in the left-hand row of counties, Shenandoah, Frederick and Berkeley; in the right-hand row, between the dividing line and the Blue Ridge, Page, Warren, Clarke and Jefferson.

The Shenandoah River heads in Augusta county, flows northeast through Rockingham, Page and the succeeding counties, keeping near the Blue Ridge, and joins the Potomac at Harper's Ferry. The North Fork of the Shenandoah heads in the western part of Rockingham county, flows northeast through Shenandoah county, then a short distance southeast around the end of Massanutten Mountain, at Strasburg, and empties into the main branch of the Shenandoah river near Front Royal, in Warren county.

It is hoped that this hasty sketch of the Shenandoah Valley will aid us to proceed in our study, will serve as a frame-work in which to fix other places, and will enable us to become better acquainted with the people inhabiting the various localities.

III. SPOTSWOOD'S EXPEDITION TO THE VALLEY.

More than a hundred years elapsed after the settlement at Jamestown, before a white man looked upon the Shenandoah Valley. Perhaps, indeed, some captive, man, woman, or child,

led westward from Tidewater or Midland by marauding bands of Mingoes or Shawnees, may have beheld the beautiful valley, with its rolling plains and sparkling waters ; but if so, with much the same feeling as that with which the exiled Hebrews gazed upon the rivers of Babylon. Or, perhaps, some daring hunter may have pushed upward through the rugged defiles of the Blue Ridge and over the opposing boulders until he stood upon some commanding summit that afforded him a panorama of the valley at his feet. However this may be, if any white man, either as a roaming hunter or as a fettered captive, ever visited that part of Virginia lying west of the Blue Ridge, previous to the year 1716, no record of that visit has been preserved; and consequently, upon Alexander Spotswood, governor of Virginia from 1710 to 1722, is bestowed the credit of first exploring the Valley of Virginia.

It was a decade or two after the beginning of the eighteenth century before any settlements were established along or near the eastern base of the Blue Ridge. Previous to this time the massive ranges loomed up before the Virginia low-landers as a forbidding barrier. "In the quaint language of the day the mountain was deemed 'unpassable.' What lay west of the range nobody knew, and everybody seemed afraid to come to see." Moreover, these rugged fastnesses, which were to some of the more ignorant class of settlers objects of almost superstitious dread, being inhabited, as some supposed, by "gorgons and hydras and chimeras dire," were also the dwelling place of hostile savage tribes. At last, however, Governor Spotswood determined to "satisfye" himself concerning the tramontane country. He had an idea that the Great Lakes lay only a little way beyond the Blue Ridge; and he may have hoped that from the summit of one of its peaks he could look down upon the waters of Lake Erie. Accordingly, on August 1, 1716, he set out from Williamsburg with a gallant company; nine gentlemen of his personal friends, a band of hardy rangers, and four guides, Meherrin Indians. They were well supplied with provisions and invigorating drinks. Having had their horses freshly shod at Germantown, ten miles below the falls of the Rappahannock, the company left that place on the 29th of August, and encamped

that night three miles from Germanna.* The camps from this time on were named in order—after the respective gentlemen in the party, the first one being called “Camp Beverly,” where “they made great fires, supped and drank good punch.” Being aroused each morning by a blast of the trumpet, they proceeded westward. Advancing along the left bank of the Rapidan, they finally crossed that river near Peyton’s Ford; passing thence near the present site of Stanardsville, in Greene county, they entered the foot-hills of the Blue Ridge by way of Swift Run Gap.

Each day of the journey was enlivened by various incidents and adventures. Some of the party encountered hornets; some ran across rattlesnakes; some were thrown from their horses. Deer and bears were killed, and liberal hunks of venison and bear-meat were roasted before the camp-fires on wooden spits. At night their beds were made upon heaps of boughs, broken from the trees and spread under arbors or tents. A keen lookout had to be maintained both day and night; for hostile savages dogged the footsteps of the party almost from the time of starting, and several sharp fights occurred with these rude children of the forest, who looked with jealous eye upon the invaders of their wilderness kingdoms.

At about 1 o’clock, on a bright day of early September, Governor Spotswood, who was riding slightly in advance, reached the brow of a declivity at the top of the mountain, and the whole glorious prospect burst at once upon his enraptured sight. For some moments, as the other members of the party came up, not a word or a sound broke the silence of the awe-inspiring scene; then two-score of vigorous voices shouted in exultant chorus, and the blaring trumpet woke the echoes of the surrounding hills and vales. The broad valley spread out before them; miles of tall grass gently waved and shimmered in the September sun;† huge patches of forest, whose foliage was just beginning to take on the mellow hues of Autumn, lent beauty and variety to the scene; the Shenandoah river, called by the

* Germanna is not shown on the present day maps. It was located in the northeast corner of what is now Orange county.

† Large tracts in the Shenandoah Valley were prairie.

red men 'Daughter of the Stars,' wound in and out among the groves and grassy meadows like a broad thread of silver in a giant's cloth of green and gold; and off yonder, a dozen miles to the north, the bold extremity of the Massanutten Mountain came jutting out into the valley, like some rugged headland in a quiet sea.*

The Governor and his company descended into the valley and forded the Shenandoah—the "Euphrates," they called it—near a place in Rockingham county known as River Bank—a point several miles down the river from the historic village of Port Republic.

As to the progress of the party thus far, historians in the main agree; but here begins a difference in statements. Most authorities declare that the expedition was continued no further west than the Shenandoah river; but some assert that the party pushed on across the Valley into the first ranges of the Alleghanies. I quote the following from Schuricht, the German writer: "The intrepid governor pushed onward to the west across the Shenandoah valley and through the mountain defiles, until on the 5th of September, 1716, on one of the loftiest peaks of the Appalachian range, probably within the limits of what is now Pendleton county in West Virginia, they halted. Governor Spotswood ordered the bugle to be sounded, speeches were made, provisions and delicious beverages partaken of, and the health of King George I. was toasted. The highest peak of the mountains was baptized 'Mount George,' and another 'Mount Spotswood or Alexander,' in honor of the governor, but nobody can tell to-day what mountain tops were thus honored."

If it be true that Governor Spotswood and his company crossed the Valley, we may readily speculate upon their route: It is natural to suppose that their course was directly northwest, in order that they might in the shortest distance reach the mountains opposite. They likely passed by the present site of Harrisonburg, and entered the outlying spurs of the Shenan-

* The southwest end of the Massanutten is a conspicuous landmark in all this region. The slope of the range rises gradually to the end, and then drops off abruptly. The end of the Massanutten, thus described, is known as "Peaked Mountain."

doah mountain—the first of the Alleghany ranges—near Rawley Springs. Thence they would most naturally have proceeded up the bed of the stream, now known as Dry river, until they reached its tributary called Skidmore's Fork. Following this stream around to the west they would have arrived in the course of a few miles at the foot of the Shenandoah mountain near where the mail road now crosses from Harrisonburg to Franklin. On the mountain summit here, about three-fourths of a mile southwest along the ridge from the point where the mail road crosses the backbone of the mountain, is one of the highest peaks in the surrounding country. Over its summit passes the State line between Virginia and West Virginia, and, coincident with it, the county line between Rockingham and Pendleton. This peak is pointed out as the "High Knob," and can be identified from a half-dozen of the successive ranges, that rise tier upon tier toward the west, until, in the shadowy distance, their skyward edges blend with the blue of the atmospheric dome. On the Shenandoah mountain, about eight or ten miles further southwest, is another high point; and I think it probable, if Spotswood was in this region at all, that this one was the "Mount Spotswood" mentioned above, and that the first one I called attention to, as the "High Knob," was the "Mount George" of historic fame. This conclusion is based, as intimated, upon the supposition that the peaks thus christened were on the west side of the Valley—a supposition which, however interesting it may be, I am, nevertheless, compelled to regard as rather untenable; and, upon the whole, I am inclined to believe, as asserted by the majority of historians, that the Governor's party never crossed the Valley. One writer (Waddell) somewhat facetiously, says:

"The most remarkable thing about this famous expedition is the quantity and variety of the liquors the party brought along. As a part of the ceremony of taking possession, besides firing volleys, they drank the health of the king, all the royal family, and the governor in Champagne, Burgundy, and claret, and had besides Virginia red and white wines, Irish usquebaugh, brandy, shrub, rum, Canary, cherry punch, cider, etc. The historian of this expedition says, *et cetera*: What more could there have been?

“No wonder the party were disinclined to explore the country farther after such potations.”

But even if the convivial draughts on the banks of the Shenandoah did not have as potent effect in turning the eyes and hearts of the jolly crowd homeward as the writer just quoted seems to think, it is reasonable to suppose that the company, after the hardships just encountered in crossing the Blue Ridge, and after the satisfying discovery of so pleasant a land beyond the mountains, would have justly deemed themselves entitled to the glory of a triumphal procession back to Williamsburg, without undertaking additional explorations with attendant hardships, further west. *

The facts concerning the “Order of the Golden Horseshoe,” founded by Governor Spotswood in commemoration of this tramontane expedition, are so well known that they need not be repeated here.

It would, perhaps, be a means of more intimately connecting this division of my essay with the general subject, could I yet relate that Governor Spotswood was a German; but, as a matter of fact, he was an Englishman; † nevertheless, it is possible to say the next best thing: his wife was a German lady. This fact may partly account for the keen interest that the Governor manifested in the various German settlers in Eastern Virginia; and it was, therefore, eminently fitting that the beautiful valley he had discovered should be settled first by Germans.

IV. EARLY GERMAN SETTLEMENTS IN THE VALLEY.

It was not until at least ten years after the date of Spotswood expedition, that permanent settlements in the Valley of Virginia were made. And the men who at length began to seek homes west of the Blue Ridge were not, as we might suppose, English-

* If “Mt. George” and “Mt. Spotswood” were peaks of the Blue Ridge, as they likely were, they cannot be identified with any degree of certainty.

† He was in reality of Scotch ancestry; but he was born (1676), in Tangier, then an English colony, Africa.

men from Eastern Virginia, following afar off in the footsteps of the knightly Governor, but they were Germans from York, Lancaster, and other counties of Pennsylvania. For a period of thirty years or more from the tardy beginning of the Valley settlements, the mountain barrier that had so long shut off the highlands of Virginia from the lowlands, still continued to prevent any considerable wave of immigration from Midland and Tidewater; so that, prior to the year 1760, or thereabouts, when the cavaliers began to pour over the Blue Ridge into the lower portion of the Valley in greater numbers, the large majority of those who settled along the Shenandoah and its tributaries were people from the northeast, who had crossed the Potomac near its junction with the Shenandoah, and had pushed their way steadily onward between the protecting parallel ranges of the Blue Ridge and the Alleghanies.

In 1732, a pioneer band of Scotch-Irish, under the leadership of John Lewis, penetrated more than a hundred miles up the Valley and located in the cluster of hills where Staunton now stands. At least four years prior to this date, several German families had established themselves—by squatter's rights, we presume—in what is now the southeastern part of Rockingham county, near the present town of Elkton. Concerning these people I quote the following from the Hon. J. A. Waddell: "We find, in 1726, several families of German people settled on the Shenandoah river not far from Swift Run Gap. They came from Pennsylvania, and that is nearly all we know about them."

In 1733 Milhart Rangdmann, Matthew Falk, Adam Muller (Miller), with several other "Dutchmen," petitioned the General Court in behalf of their right at "Massanutting," which rights, they said, were being contested by William Beverley, who had attempted in 1732 to obtain a grant of land including "Massanutting Town," the Indian name of a certain "old field" on the "Shenandore." Rangdmann, Falk and Muller state in their petition (1733) that "four years past" they had purchased for "a great Sum of Money, Amounting to Upwards of four hundred pounds," 5,000 acres of land from Jacob Stover; * that they

* We shall hear more of Stover further on.

had emigrated from Lancaster County, Pa.; that when they had come to their present place of settlement, four years previously (1729), there were "very few Inhabitants in them parts of Shenando" (Shenandoah), and that at the date of their petition they had nine plantations, and fifty-one persons, young and old, thereon.

By a comparison of the foregoing paragraphs we may conclude that the German families that were settled on the Shenandoah river, near Swift Run Gap, in 1726, were the "very few Inhabitants" found in 1729 by Rangdmann, Falk and others, and that the "old field" (Massanutting Town) was in the southeastern part of Rockingham, or in the southwestern part of Page county, probably on the left bank of the Shenandoah river, near the Massanutten Mountain. Stover obtained his grant on the Shenandoah river about 1730, and it is likely that Rangdmann, Falk, and their company, together, perhaps, with the few families that had preceded them, bought their "claims" of Stover at once, for they evidently had the start of Beverley in that section, since he was not successful, so far as we know, in enforcing his claim against them. Inasmuch as Beverley did not apply for his grant in this locality until 1733, ample time would thus have been allowed for the purchase at "Massanutting" to be closed with Stover before that date.

(TO BE CONTINUED)